The uncanny threshold as a device in painting

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Abstract

This research explores the uncanny threshold in painting. The uncanny threshold is a concept derived from my personal experience of contemporary Australian architecture in the form of Lovett Bay House, the private home of architects Richard Leplastrier and Karen Lambert in New South Wales. This research argues that Lovett Bay House challenges Malpas's view (2008) that the threshold is something that needs to be crossed, as a zone of transition, in order to be a threshold. At Lovett Bay House, the absence of a conventional door, and the effective removal of the front wall, shifts the concept of the threshold as space of transition (from inside to outside or vice versa) to the threshold as a zone of habitation – a space in which one dwells. Within the zone of habitation it is argued that everyday experiences are made extraordinary through the simultaneous and overlapping space of the extended entranceway; the inside and outside experienced as one, and, what I have termed, the uncanny threshold.

It is the aim of this research to explore the physical entity and felt experience of the uncanny threshold through the pictorial space of painting. In the first instance, a genealogy of the threshold is developed, drawing on the sublime as a device in painting. Key works by Caspar David Friedrich, James Abbott McNeill Whistler and J.M.W. Turner have been selected, each demonstrating a particular approach to the sublime and, hence, the threshold in painting. In the contemporary setting, works by Peter Doig, Karin Mamma Andersson and Jess MacNeil have been selected to explore the uncanny threshold in painting. The key devices relevant to this research are described as a "twofold temporal movement" (Grenier 2007, p. 107-108) in the case of Doig; twofold spatial movement in the case of Andersson and twofold spatio-temporal movement in the case of MacNeil. Each of these works demonstrates an approach to the threshold, and provides a means through which I am able to develop and convey my own exploration of the threshold as a spatio-temporal threshold that houses the two in one.

This research draws upon three key aspects of the Modernist movement: a framework of tradition, material experimentation and a continual experimental approach. The

final methodology develops a series of *incidents* that work to emulate the overlapping and simultaneous concurrence of space found in the reveal zone of the threshold at Lovett Bay House. The architectural *reveal*, a structural component concealed within the conventional threshold, becomes apparent when one is 'tripped up' in crossing the threshold. At Lovett bay House, due to the architectural arrangement of the threshold, the reveal is continuously present. The incidents as methodological device produce a series of images that allow one to visually contemplate the threshold as a zone of habitation in painting; images that are familiar, yet curiously strange. The incidents work sequentially and as a whole to disrupt the logical, linear progression of each painting and in doing so, demonstrate that the threshold is a place of simultaneous and overlapping spatio-temporal zones.

The final images are not a representation of the threshold. Rather, the threshold has been used as a methodological device. The resulting images, produced through this research clearly demonstrate that painting, like architecture, is able to exemplify a form of threshold where movement and transition do not apply. The uncanny threshold as overlapping and simultaneous spaces and incidents generates a familiar yet strange set of unfixed, amplified, ambiguous, uncertain, sensory and spatial awareness.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Aim

The aim of this research is to explore and demonstrate, via painterly research and experimentation, the *simultaneous and overlapping concurrence of space*, where experiences in the everyday are made extraordinary. I call this spatial experience (of being at Lovett Bay House) and the painterly technique and expression (demonstrated in the works of this research), the *uncanny threshold*. It is to these concepts of simultaneous and overlapping concurrence of space, both as physical entity and felt experience, that this exegesis goes on to explore, in particular, establishing ways that these guide an approach to painting pictorial space.

The relationship between architecture and the threshold is fundamental. In conventional architecture, the threshold is in the zone of the doorway. Malpas (2008, no page given) states: "The threshold … is not a place in which one can remain – to do so is for it to cease to be a threshold – but is always a place of movement and transition…". In conventional architecture, the threshold, as the traditional modality of the doorway, is a narrow zone of transition and, as it is minimises entry points, is designed to protect the inhabitant from threats to the inside of the home. In doing so, however, the conventional architectural threshold, through the ability to close the door, inadvertently works to *limit* entry and, by proxy, events and experiences – sheerly by keeping things out.

Drawing on contemporary Australian architecture, and specifically the private home of Richard Leplastrier and Karen Lambert at Lovett Bay in New South Wales, this research makes the claim that, contrary to Malpas's statement (2008, no page given), the threshold need not be a transitional space through which one moves. Rather, it is argued, that in the case of Lovett Bay House, where there is no clearly bounded or designated inside/outside, there is, therefore, no transition across the threshold. Rather, I argue, in the place where the threshold might have been is instead a *zone of habitation*. This zone of habitation may be conceptualised as a simultaneous space,

where inside and outside coalesce and overlap to form a single space within which one dwells.

In conventional domestic architecture, the nature of walls and doors means that when one is outside the inside is concealed, and when one is inside the outside is concealed. Only when one is in the threshold (and, according to Malpas (2008), *in transition*) are both inside and outside revealed simultaneously. This research argues that extending the zone of the threshold to the extent that the walls and doors are not present, works to extend the capacity for experience within that zone. Lovett Bay House facilitates this extension of experience by removing the conventionally concealing boundary (the wall and door) and, thus, when at Lovett Bay House, one is always in the threshold. From personal experience of having lived at Lovett Bay for extended periods over many years, I have found that when dwelling in the threshold experiences that would normally be everyday and mundane are (re)configured to become heightened and extraordinary; familiar yet strange. As a result, things are revealed in their everyday: they are in the *reveal* all the time. For the purposes of this research, I call this space the *uncanny threshold*; as much for what it *i*s, as for what it *does*. It is this sense of awareness, brought about by the uncanny threshold in painting that this research seeks to explore.

Research problem

The problem that this research seeks to address is that the concept of the threshold is perceived as something that must be *moved through* in order for it to be a threshold (see Malpas, 2008). I argue that the conceptualisation of the threshold as something that must necessarily be moved though in order to be a threshold, is based on an understanding of conventional architecture that does not take into account contemporary architectural practice, and particularly architecture that seeks to foster connection between landscape and dwelling[1]. Richard Leplastrier is an esteemed Australian architect who, through his work and his life, challenges and enhances what it means to dwell in Australia. Leplastrier and Lambert, with their single room open to

[1] That is not to say that it is only these architects who foster a relationship with landscape and architecture, but rather, that this is where my personal experience lies.

the world, Lovett Bay House, reconfigure the relationship between architecture and the threshold. In doing so, they break down the division between inside and outside.

Conventional architecture presupposes a transition from one place to another; from outside to inside and vice versa. Effectively, this relies on boundaries and division. The problem, therefore, is how to inhabit or how to bridge that zone. Lovett Bay House bridges it through the architectural dismantling of the boundary. The question, then, is how to bridge that zone through painting.

This research proposes that:

- This zone can be pictured in painting in a way that allows one to contemplate it visually, dwell in it etc.
- Painting can exemplify a form of threshold in which movement and transition do not apply.
- Painting can emulate an uncanny threshold, derived from architecture, in which the familiar is made strange.
- The uncanny threshold is a place of simultaneous and overlapping spatio-temporal zones.

Hypothesis and significance

The hypothesis of this research is that, in some architectural circumstances, particularly in the example of Lovett Bay House, the threshold may be perceived as a simultaneous or overlapping space that, in everyday circumstance, generates an awareness that is both familiar and strange and, significantly, that both this overlapping space and the awareness of the familiar and strange, may be conveyed through painting. This is done through the use of a sequence of methodological incidents (see below) that provide overlapping or simultaneous spaces that render the painting familiar – yet strange.

The significance of this research is that it advances the painterly discourse in regard to the threshold. This discourse has its origins in the concept of the sublime threshold including, but not limited to the work of Caspar David Friedrich, J.M.W. Turner and James Abbott McNeill Whistler. The contemporary threshold has been developed through the work of Peter Doig, Karin Mamma Andersson and Jess MacNeil. This research has been influenced by, and provides an extension of, the painted form and ideas presented in these artists' works.

Overview of methods

It is the aim of this research to explore the uncanny threshold in painting. In doing so, the research investigates creative possibilities that result from deliberately disrupting logical, linear or transitional processes of making a painting. Deliberate disruption of the logical, linear transition of a painting occurs through the use of what I have termed *incidents*. These incidents include the visual, representational, editorial, painting and concealing-revealing incidents. These incidents will be discussed further in the methodology. It is important to note the paintings of this research do not seek to represent the ideas of the threshold; rather, the paintings are a product of the threshold as a methodological device.

The key that brings the aims of the research together is that rather than a *transition*, each painting is the result of several *overlapping* incidents. This corresponds directly with the threshold and Lovett Bay House, as previously discussed. Several devices are drawn from the Modernist era, including material experimentation and the deliberate departure from tradition, and the application of several processual and technical incidents. The use of incidents in the work restricts control over the painterly outcomes; some things are revealed and others are concealed. The resulting paintings exude a sense of being not quite right; they are familiar in terms of their composition, yet they are strange: they reveal and conceal and in doing so they explore the *uncanny threshold* in painting.

Chapter 2: Context

The Threshold

Chapter 2 begins by describing the origins of this research through the work of architects Richard Leplastrier and Karen Lambert and their home, Lovett Bay House in NSW. Chapter 2 goes on to explore the concepts that are significant to the research. These include the threshold, the sublime, (through the works of Friedrich, Turner and Whistler), and the uncanny threshold through the works of Doig, Andersson and MacNeil.

Genesis of the research

Gaston Bachelard ([1958] 1994, p. 6) states: "the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind" many be found in "the house". This research originates in a personal experience of architecture in which my perception and understanding were transformed. The location for my personal experience was the home of Richard Leplastrier and Karen Lambert in Lovett Bay, New South Wales. Both Leplastrier and Lambert are established architects; Leplastrier recognized internationally for his contribution to Australian architecture. Having spent much time living in, and building, several of their architectural works, I can personally attest to the extraordinary nature of their buildings. Leplastrier and Lambert's family home is perhaps the most extraordinary of all.

The design of Lovett Bay House demonstrates an appreciation of Japanese aesthetics combined with an Australian 'sense of place' that might roughly translate as *honest detailed simplicity*. Shown in Figure 1, Lovett Bay House is a single room, unglazed, timber dwelling, set on the edge of a national park, overlooking a creek and bay. The western face of the building, a section of which forms the entrance, remains open to the landscape for all but a few weeks of the year. The kitchen is set outside and the washhouse is located at a distance from the main room, accessible via sawn plank bridge. That there is no glass means that there is no artificial boundary between inside and outside.

Figure 1: Lovett Bay House, Richard Leplastrier and the extended opening (Leplastrier, 2004).

There are many significant qualities imbued within Lovett Bay House that make being there an extraordinary experience. There is no doubt that the synergy found in the combination of materials, human craft in the construction, the location, and design – and perhaps the inhabitants themselves – generate an unusual and particular quality. There is, however, one aspect of the design that I have identified as being integral to what I describe as an *unfixed, amplified, ambiguous, uncertain, sensory and spatial awareness*. This amplified sensory and spatial awareness has influenced my practice as a painter and, hence, the process of this research. The architectural feature to which I refer is the extended opening, some metres in length, that doubles as an entranceway and a place to be seated: a key space in which to congregate and engage. Indeed, the entire living space is *conducted* through the interactions at this central zone of the extended entranceway. The extended entranceway is visible in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

Figure 2: Lovett Bay House and the extended opening, looking north (Leplastrier, 2004)

There are a number of ways in which extending the entranceway works to *amplify* the space of the home. Being a single room house, extending the doorframe by several metres, is comparable to removing a wall – the impact on the living space is profound. The absence of the protective barrier provided by a wall, allows the place to enter the home. In my time there I have seen goannas, snakes, rats and mice, birds, wallabies, bush turkeys and skinks all within the normal boundaries of the home. The result is that the inside and outside are merged, and, seemingly, become one.

Figure 3: Lovett Bay House: extended opening, looking south-east (Butler, 2010)

Being *inside* at Lovett Bay is akin to being *outside*: creating a simultaneity and concurrence of space. This concurrence of inside and outside space works to influence what *happens*, impacting on interpersonal interactions and interactive place making of those who dwell there. There is a sense that, at Lovett Bay House, the experiences available multiply and amplify, facilitating an enhanced capacity to engage with the place and with others. This prompts the question, is there something about entranceways, and, more specifically, the Lovett Bay House entranceway, that can be so special? The answer to this may be found, in part, through an exploration into the discourse on the threshold.

The threshold and Lovett Bay House

Drawing and expanding on the experiences and ideas of Lovett bay House, the paintings of this research seek to explore the notion of being *in* the threshold rather than *transitioning* through. As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this research, and, hence, this exegesis is to demonstrate that the threshold need not be limited to a transition from one form to another, but rather, can be a perpetual zone of ambivalence or uncertainty. The corresponding question presented by this research asks: is it possible to be in the threshold of painting? The threshold of painting includes the act of painting (painting as performance), painting as object, painting as idea, and painterly interpretation.

The threshold is significant in popular culture through the symbolic ritual of carrying one's partner 'across the threshold' (in particular, as newly weds). As seen in Figures 4 and 5, the conventional doorframe is typically narrow, scaled to a size relative to the human body. This narrowness makes crossing the threshold likely to be a rapid experience, though a significant moment in a couple's journey together.

Figure 4: The conventional threshold (Weiku, 2016).

Figure 5: Newly-weds crossing the conventional threshold (Nelson, 2010).

At Lovett Bay House, the architecture of the threshold has been re-configured such that it creates a new set of relationships and experiences both *with* and *within* the built form. This new set of relationships and experiences begins with the approach to the building[2]. While ascending the stairs on the pathway through the bush, up to the house, one begins to recognize that this place is different; the recognizable aspects of the conventional suburban Australian home, an example of which is shown in Figure 6, are not immediately apparent, and perhaps, noticeably absent.

[2] I understand this aspect of the landscape quite well as, some years ago I spent several months building the stairs.

Figure 6: The conventional Australian house (Rea Group).

The effect is destabilizing as it becomes apparent that, at Lovett Bay House, familiar understandings of architecture and place in Australia have been configured in a new way (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Lovett Bay House: approach from the stairs (Screen Australia, 2000).

Following this initial destabilizing, one climbs the final stairs that flow seamlessly onto a wide, open verandah (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Lovett Bay House: approach along south verandah (Leplastrier, 2004).

From the verandah one merges into the living area and the space of the extended entranceway into the single room and one enters the zone of the threshold (see Figures 8 and 9).

Figure 9: Lovett Bay House: extended opening, looking south-east (Leplastrier, 2004).

The dominant discursive understanding of the threshold suggests that the threshold is a *limit*, or an *edge* to be crossed. Malpas (2013, p. 2) states:

> In the Greek world, the liminal was the realm of both Hermes and Hestia – two gods who meet at the threshold, one welcoming us within and the other carrying us without – into the street, onto the road, out to the horizon (itself understood as a border or boundary. The lived body has this same dynamic character, opening outward to the world and inward to the self.

Conventionally, the threshold involves coming up to an edge, and crossing over to a new zone: *crossing the threshold*. At Lovett Bay House, the gradual movement up the stairs and into the zone of the threshold perpetuates the sense of anticipation of the edge. Quite simply, the boundaries are not defined in a usual way. As a result, one's bearings are distorted and remain that way throughout one's experience of the space. The unknowingness, or feeling of being 'held within the threshold' stays with you.

Malpas refers to the threshold as a *transition* (2007). According to Malpas (2007, no page given) the *transition* is what allows the threshold to be a threshold. He states:

> [e]very threshold is placed at an edge, and yet not merely an edge, for the threshold always carries with it a sense of opening up toward or closing away from. Only that place at the edge that anticipates or remembers can constitute a threshold. The threshold thus is not a place in which one can remain – to do so is for it to cease to be a threshold – but is always a place of movement and transition…

I argue, however, that Lovett Bay House provides the mechanism through which the concept of the threshold may be perceived differently. Exploring specular devices that have allowed us to envisage the liminal world (mirrors, windows, frames), theorist Georges Teyssot (2005) suggests that architecture – as a bridge between nature and the domestic world – has sought to define the existence of the threshold. Teyssot (2005, p. 106) argues that contemporary habitation is possibly "not so much to become exteriorised, or nomadic, as to find the home no longer neither simply an

interior nor an exterior. 'Living' is somehow now to occupy the space between the two, inhabiting the threshold". Teyssot is partly correct in that the threshold is a zone of habitation, but it is not, however, a zone *between*.

The research is concerned with, and seeks to demonstrate, a zone where the threshold is present as a *spatial nexus* that contains both inside and outside as one. It does not seek to explore the threshold as a movement *from* one place *to* another (as suggested by Malpas 2007), nor does it seek to explore the threshold as a space between (as suggested by Teyssot 2005). One might say that the significant quality of the threshold of Lovett Bay House is that it swells to include the internal space of the building *and* the external space of the landscape. Thus, when one is inside the building, one is also outside in the landscape. At Lovett Bay House, when located in the zone of the threshold, one may be stationary, as compared with moving *through*. At Lovett Bay House, the *transition* referred to by Malpas (2007) as the necessary criterion for a threshold to be a threshold, is not removed, but, rather, is extended (in the sense that it is not limited). Rather than an individual transitioning through a doorway, as in the newly weds, at Lovett Bay House the threshold swells to become an ambiguous space, where boundaries are less clearly defined; where internal and external overlap and where the threshold is broadened.

The overlapping threshold found at Lovett Bay House results in an immersive: amplified and ambiguous sensory and spatial experience within everyday situations, interactions and circumstances[3]. In regard to the conception of the threshold as a space that one must necessarily move through in order for the space to be a threshold, Malpas (2013, p. 4) states: "… in its dynamic character, the threshold is also given to being overstepped, and so to being overlooked and even disregarded." In passing through the conventional doorframe and, hence, threshold, one does not generally recognise it. Malpas (2013, pp. 5-6) states:

> The character of the liminal as withdrawing, as overlooked, as given to a form of 'disappearance', also belongs to the character of the lived body. The body

[3] A similar idea may be found in the reading of Heidegger's (1971) essay entitled *Building Dwelling Thinking.*

> tends to withdraw in favour of that which it moves us towards – it 'disappears' in favour of the world – except, of course, when the body is itself the focus of that movement or when it impedes it. When we stumble at the threshold, when our movement through is somehow hindered, or when we simply look to attend to the threshold itself (perhaps to admire a feature of the doorway) then the threshold becomes evident to us even as its functioning as a threshold may be diminished or impaired.

At Lovett Bay House, however, rather than being centralised at the threshold, one's normal central relationship with inside and outside is interrupted. In interrupting this relationship, things are perceived differently; that is, things are revealed in an unusual way. As stated by Malpas (2013), we are accustomed to 'not seeing' the transition from inside to outside; it is concealed. However, when one is located in the threshold over an extended period of time, as is the experience at Lovett Bay House, the usual transition from inside to outside or vice versa, is interrupted: one is held within the threshold and the details within the threshold become heightened – they are revealed.

This idea of the *reveal* is physically evident in the structure of the conventional doorway (see Figure 10). According to Malpas (2013), it is only when we are tripped-up in crossing the threshold that one is forced to see things – the reveal – almost by accident. That is, one is forced to see the revealment, and in so doing, one might see something that is usually concealed.

At Lovett Bay House, however, because it is expanded or swollen to such an extent, the threshold incorporates the inside and outside at the same time, and what is held within is *revealed*. The detail in the threshold, in the form of every day objects, is revealed in an unusual way. This unusual revealing may take the form of a meal, bowl, drink or conversation. The threshold is not revealed as a tripping up; at Lovett Bay House, it is just a revealing. In everyday life, the ordinary is concealed through its very mundanity. But because of the unusual circumstances at Lovett Bay House, anything ordinary brought into this circumstance is revealed in a new way.

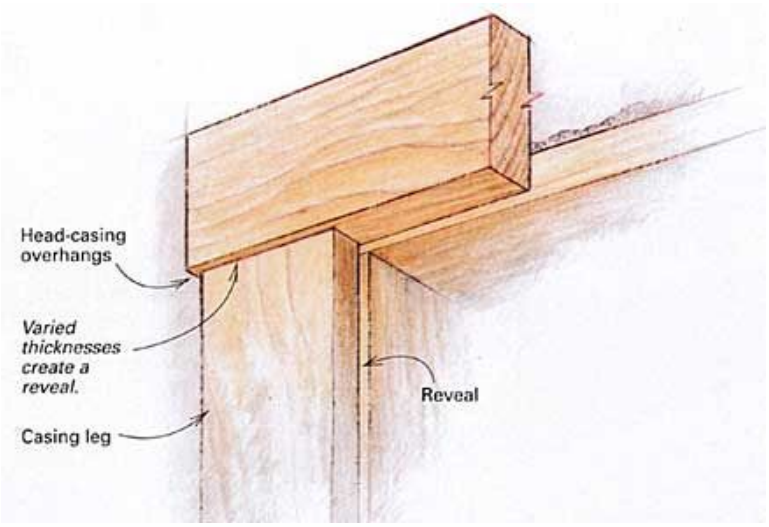

Figure 10: The reveal (Beemer, 1997)

It is necessary at this point to clarify the intentions of this exegesis. That the conventional threshold is a significant space is not in question. What is in question, however, is that the significance of the threshold *per se*, must, by necessity, rely on a *transition* in order to gain significance[4].

This exegesis seeks to demonstrate that the threshold may be experienced and conceptualized as an architectural experience – in new terms. Further, I argue, and seek to demonstrate both in this exegesis and in the paintings, that the threshold may be a 'concurrence of both inside and outside', rather than a pure transition as described by Malpas. Indeed, this exegesis posits that the paintings of this research contain a threshold in the same way that Lovett Bay House does. It is argued that in fact, painting amplifies this conception of the threshold because there is no possibility of (physical) transition: a painting does not allow one to move through it.

The central methodological device of this research is to apply an overlapping or simultaneous moment – a threshold – to each phase of the painting process. There are five key 'thresholds' that are applied at various stages throughout the generation of a painting. These thresholds include: the initial experio-incident of the artist; sourcing

[4] The transition will be discussed more fully in the coming paragraphs.

the image; editing the image; transferring the image through drawing onto the canvas; the underpainting using drips, drops and pours; and, the final stage and the most significant aspect of the painting process, the *concealing-revealing* incident. This may include both thin and thick uses of paint to both obscure and reveal. Each threshold will be discussed at length in the following parts of this chapter.

Applying the 'threshold' to each phase of the painting process works to disrupt the logical linearity of each painting's development or progression. Applying a threshold to each phase of the work exposes it to an interruption and, thus, leads to circumstances and outcomes that are unexpected, incidental, and 'not quite right'. The resulting incidents do not have a direct intention and are not seeking a specific representational outcome – what occurs is what is. While it is essential that the conceptual ideas and the paintings are able to coalesce, and, that the threshold is used as a device to explore painting, the paintings do not *represent* the ideas of the threshold, rather, the paintings are a product of the threshold as a methodological device. In order to explain the threshold as a device in painting more effectively, it is necessary to show the evolution of the idea.

An amplified experience within the threshold, as described above, to which I refer as 'a gathering' or nexus of outside and inside, may be contextualised within ideas of the *sublime*.

The sublime threshold

The sublime, as a concept, has undergone numerous iterations throughout history – a process that has extended and enlivened the sublime as an idea (Hoffman & Whyte 2011). While it is not the scope of this exegesis to go into detail, it is necessary to provide background material to contextualise what is to come.

The concept of the sublime originates, etymologically, in the spatial experience and understanding of the threshold. The sublime derives from *sub* 'up to' + *limen* 'lintel', where 'lintel' is the horizontal crosspiece over the doorway or windowsill (OED

2015). This etymology locates the threshold, and, thus, the sublime, in the liminal zones of architecture. The sublime describes a heightened or transformative experience resulting from the experience of being at a physical or conceptual limit or edge.

Burke (1757, p. 51) defines the sublime in the landscape as:

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.... When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and [yet] with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience.

The experience of terror, or awe, takes one across a threshold, or a limit, and, thus, to exceed that limit. This exceeding occurs as a result of experiencing the incomprehensible. One cannot make sense of the experience, and, therefore, it may be said to be sublime.

I now develop a genealogy of the threshold, drawing on the sublime as a device in painting. The purpose of this is to demonstrate how the sublime has been represented, so that I may show what, in terms of the threshold, this research attempts to achieve. Three artists significant to both the sublime and this research are Caspar David Friedrich, J.M.W. Turner, and James Abbott Neill Whistler. Selected works from each of these three artists are used to demonstrate how I have come to convey the threshold in my own painting.

Friedrich demonstrates the figure *approaching* the threshold, Turner the *transformation within* the threshold and Whistler the *space between the transitions* from one form to another. I now elaborate on how the selected works inform an exploration into the threshold in painting.

Caspar David Friedrich

In Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea* (1810; Figure 11), ideas of the sublime are made apparent. The sublime transformation of the figure is implicated by the location and the corresponding mood of the picture. In *Monk by the Sea*, the horizon does not appear to be certain or fixed – rather, it carries a dark and foreboding element. This sense of the foreboding is implicated in the religious elements of the picture evidenced in the title and the clothing of the figure. The figure stands on the edge of the land, with a gaze directed toward the further edge of the horizon. The figure (standing in for the viewer) is presented with a series of boundaries beginning with the limit of the land against the sea, and further, the limit of the horizon against the sky. This configuration represents the known and familiar of the land, set against the indeterminacy of the sea. *Monk by the Sea* is a work about boundaries; it symbolizes being before the threshold, at the boundary of the limit. The effect is that one exceeds their experience or their comprehension of the situation or the location.

Figure 11: Caspar David Friedrich, *Monk by the Sea* (1808-10), oil on canvas, 110x171.5cm, AlteNationalGallerie, Berlin.

Friedrich places the figure at an edge or boundary, such that it stands *before* the threshold, in a state of *approach*. The monk is at the edge of the sea, looking at the

sky, where the sky would normally be the domain of the gods. But it is not the domain of the gods in this picture. Rather, the sky is foreboding and ungodly and may even be considered mundanely human.

Though Monk by the sea is relevant to this exegesis, it differs in the way that it deals with the threshold. As has been demonstrated above in the case of Lovett Bay House, this research is not trying to create a thing *before*, or an *approach* to the boundary or threshold. Rather, this research seeks to explore the idea of the figure being *within* the threshold.

J.M.W. Turner

In the work of J.M.W. Turner, the sublime is also made apparent. In *Snowstorm: Steamboat off a Harbour's Mouth* (1842; Figure 12), the absence of both land and figure position the viewer within the tumultuous sea and sky. In comparison to Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea*, Turner has replaced the religious connotation that is evident in Friedrich's work with that of nature and the (human) industrial environment. At the time the picture was painted, Turner was witness to developments occurring as part of the industrial revolution. In *Snowstorm: Steamboat off a Harbour's Mouth*, Turner conveys the sense of upheaval present in the landscape at that time that was brought on by industrialization processes – and the implication is violent. Turner engulfs the viewer, too, in the maelstrom of his brush marking and diffuse forms. It is within this transition, implied through the steam ship and, thus, industry, along with the tumultuous elements of nature, that Turner positions the viewer *within* the threshold.

Figure 12: JMW Turner, *Snow Storm - Steam Boat off a Harbour's Mouth* (1842), oil on canvas, 91.4x121.9cm, Tate Gallery, London.

Where Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea* demonstrates the approach to the threshold, Turner's work captures the moment *within* the threshold. Whereas Friedrich has the figure positioned in front of nature (nature that is the sublime representation of God), Turner puts the figure in front of nature, *without* God. It is, however, a nature that is being transformed by humans through the industrial revolution.

Both *Monk by the Sea* (Friedrich, 1810) and *Snowstorm: Steamboat off a Harbour's Mouth,* (Turner, 1842), are about the threshold. The sublime is about being transformed by something: about the change from one form to another. Where the Friedrich work is in the moment preceding, the Turner work is in the moment of upheaval, and, thus, Turner's work places the viewer within a threshold of dissolution. The significance of the Turner work is that it is tumultuous, in upheaval; it is violent and unstable.

While the sublime is a tranformational threshold, this is not what this project is about. It is not about the sublime. It is not about being violently transformed. Rather, this project is about being in the state of two conditions or places simultaneously. Not in transformation, nor in the moment preceeding or following it, but, rather, you are in all of those things at the same time. In contrast to Turner, shown above, the sense of the threshold this research seeks to explore is not that of a violent upheaval.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

In the work of James Abbott McNeill Whistler, the sublime is made apparent in a different way to that presented in the work of Friedrich and Turner above. Shaw (2013, no page given), writing of *Nocturne, Blue and Silver Cremorne Lights* (Whistler 1872; see Figure 13), describes a "sly undermining of the stereotypical sublime". While Whistler employs conventions and techniques of the painterly sublime, he also subverts it.

Figure 13: James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Silver - Cremorne Lights* (1872), oil on canvas, 50x74cm, Tate Gallery, London.

On first impression, Whistler is depicting a vast, infinite landscape that is the River Thames. In terms of the sublime, the image may be considered as "lofty" and "glorious". Scratching the surface of this location, one reveals that the Cremorne Gardens, where the painting is located, is a "site associated with lewd activities incongruent with the sublime" (Shaw 2013, no page given). Similarly, the beauty found in the hazy, romantic scene is due primarily to the pollution being released from the chimneys of the mills of Battersea evidenced on the far horizon. According to Shaw, there is a certain artificiality found in the picture. Whistler uses a Japanese woodblock printing technique to display his signature and places a Japanese style bamboo plant in the corner. Shaw (2013, no page given) states:

> As the eye vacillates between the illusory depth of the far horizon and the two-dimensional immediacy of the butterfly icon, the viewer's sense of spatial coherence is undermined so that that which appeared sublime – the association between landscape painting, depth of field and the imprint of the divine – is rendered gloriously artificial.

The key subversive element in the painting, however, is the fluid shape floating on the surface in the foreground of the painting. While it might be a boat of some kind, there is no doubt that the floating form gestures toward that of a human body. This again harks to the danger and violence of the place. Shaw (2013, no page given) states: "[i]nstead of penetrating a mystical horizon, the viewer is confronted with an intimation of mortality that is alternately repellent and fascinating". The result is that "… the force, or *energeia*, of the painting is such that the viewer can no longer, as in traditional conceptions of the sublime, establish themselves in relation to a coherent boundary; instead of possessing the sublime, the 'would-be possessor' finds him or herself unwittingly possessed by the uncanny." Its uncanny, because something familiar exists alongside something exceedingly strange.

In terms of the threshold, Whistler is located at the plate at the bottom of the door. Where Friedrich is in *approach* to the threshold and Turner is in a process of *transition across* the threshold, Whistler is caught in the *moment between* – caught between the artificiality of the symbols on the surface, the beauty of the landscape, the

lewdness of the gardens, and the beauty of the smokestacks and the pollution emanating from them. These collectively lead to the idea that this image is always floating between.

Friedrich, Turner and Whistler provide a historical genealogy of the sublime and for ideas of the threshold and the limit. While they differ significantly from my own exploration, they form a framework through which my own painting practice may be described. Drawing on the work of three contemporary artists, the following section seeks to contextualise the threshold as a device in painting, and in doing so, to distinguish and orient my own work in relation to these. The three artists explored are Peter Doig, Karin Mamma Andersson and Jess MacNeil.

The uncanny threshold

According to the OED (2015) the uncanny refers to the "strange or mysterious, especially in an unsettling way". Malpas (2013, p. 4) states: "it is commonplace to talk about the uncanny as the *mood of Modernism*". According to Freud (1919, p. 2), "…*heimlich, heimisch,* ...[refers] to the 'familiar,' 'native,' 'be- longing to the home'", (italics in original), while *unheimlich* is the opposite of *heimlich* in that it refers to the unknown, unhomely and unfamiliar. He argues, however, that the word *heimlich*, as well as being "familiar and congenial", is also "that which is concealed and out of sight". Thus, "unheimlich is the name for everything that ought to have remained … secret and hidden but has come to light" (Freud 1919, p. 4). One may, in this instance, draw on the example found in commonplace architecture: that the openings provided by windows and doors reveal what is otherwise concealed within the walled structure of the home.

This provides a significant segue back to the threshold and the extended entranceway at Lovett Bay House. At Lovett Bay House, where the entranceway is an extended opening, the inside and outside are brought together in such a way that they spatially overlap. What is typically concealed in a (conventional) building design – *the heimlich* – is revealed at Lovett Bay House. Indeed, this is the case when living at Lovett bay House – there are certain *unheimlich* qualities: it is not comfortable as

such, and nor are things easy. But it is more than the experience of things being difficult. Rather, it is in the "coming to light" brought about by the extended entranceway that things are revealed in everyday experience that would otherwise remain hidden. This is complicated to explain – suffice to say that one's awareness is heightened and one's perspective on the world is opened through being at Lovett Bay House.

The threshold – expanded by the extended entranceway – becomes a site of multiplied and amplified spatial awareness. I refer to this concurrence of inside/outside space and the revealing or bringing to light of the (conventionally concealed) *heimlich* as the *uncanny threshold*.

In the following section I will explore the work of three contemporary artists who confront this *uncanny threshold*. I will describe how these artists do this, and explain how my work differs in both practice and theoretical orientation. The three artists are Peter Doig, who oscillates between two time frames; Karin Mamma Andersson, who occupies a space of memory; and Jess MacNeil, who illuminates the empty spaces. In demonstrating what these works do in relation to the uncanny threshold, while also illuminating how my own works differ, I can create a new perspective on the threshold in painting.

Peter Doig

The key device in Doig's work that is relevant to this research is an oscillation between two times, or a "twofold temporal movement", described by Grenier (2007, pp. 107-108). Doig uses this "twofold temporal movement" to dislocate the viewer and then to re-locate them in a new perspective. Grenier (2007, pp. 107-108) states that it is Doig's aim to first "distance a familiar historical territory, and then to return to it as a new land, to recognize [sic] it anew". Further she states, "[i]f we look back over Doig's development, we will see that all his work presents us with this kind of duality; the subject is isolated and made accessible again, recharged with an original power." This "twofold temporal movement" is evident in the fact that many of Doig's works are recollections of his past, drawn from when he was residing in a distant,

different place to where the work is made. Doig was born in Scotland and spent several years in Trinidad before moving to Canada as a teenager. Many of Doig's works derive from reflection upon his past years in Canada, from his present perspective in London.

Doig's work entitled *100 Years Ago* (2000) is indicative of the "twofold temporal movement" outlined by Grenier (2007, pp. 107-108). In the first instance, the "twofold temporal movement" may be found in the curious chronological title of the work, *100 Years Ago*. The title is clearly ambiguous, as the painting appears to display a character reminiscent of the 1970s, with long hair and passive and detached persona (see Figure 14) – clearly not from one hundred years ago.

Figure 14: Peter Doig, *100 Years Ago (Carrera)* (2001), oil on canvas, 229x358cm, Musee National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris.

The 1970s time frame is confirmed when it is revealed that the image of the painting was drawn from a pop image of a band album cover[5] (Figure 15). Doig is not trying to reproduce an image from that place (in this instance, Canada); rather, he uses an image from his then current life, experiencing popular culture in London, in order to look back at his own past in Canada – as evidenced by the canoe[6].

Figure 15: Allman Brothers band picture, 1972 (Peter Doig, No Foreign Lands, accessed 20/12/14).

Another use of the twofold temporal movement may be found in the horizontal panels that compose the image. The use of the horizontal panels (fore, middle and back ground) in Doig's 100 Years Ago (Figure 14) is a reference drawn directly from Matisse's *Bathers with a Turtle* (1908; Figure 16). As Grenier observes: "The lake has become an abstract composition, holding the boat in the accumulation of horizontal strips that fills the entire space of this very big, wide painting" (2007, p. 107).

Doig looks to the Matisse and the work of others and applies the methodologies and techniques that were being used almost 100 years prior. What happens is that the viewer looks at the Doig work (Figure 14), one might say, *through* the Matisse

[5] In this case, the image is drawn from an album cover of the Allman Brothers, a band that had split up due to the death of one if its founding members. The Doig painting, however, shows only one person in the boat rather than the album cover's full contingent.

[6] The canoe is integral to indigenous Canadian Aboriginal life history and is an icon of Canadian life today (CDN Icons, accessed 3/3/2016).

(Figure 16). This results in the viewer being simultaneously there in the moment with the Doig image, but also simultaneously going back to the Matisse.

Figure 16: Henri Matisse, *Bathers with a Turtle* (1907-08), oil on canvas, 181.6x221cm, St Louis Art Museum, St Louis.

Finally, the third element of the "twofold temporal movement" referred to by Grenier (2007, p. 108) may be found in the island that rises up behind the figure, at the top of the canvas. The island references Die Toteninsel (The Island of the Dead) by the Symbolist painter Arnold Bocklin, though it is drawn from Doig's memory of a real island off the coast of Trinidad.

Rosa (2015, no page given) describes this play with times and places as a "fantasy landscape narrative". That Rosa refers to Doig's work as *narrative* is interesting, as Doig (2007 p. 124) himself, states: "[t]hey are totally non-linguistic. There is no textual support to what you are seeing… I am trying to create something that is questionable, something that is difficult if not impossible, to put into words". Doig goes on to say, "[t]here is something more primal about painting…there is something quite basic about them [the paintings], which inevitably is to do with their

materiality". Doig makes every effort to demonstrate that the work is in fact a painting, rather than a reproduction of the reality. The fantasy landscape narrative may be just that – a fantasy narrative – where things are not as they might seem (Rexer 2008). As a fantasy narrative, Doig's work is elusive and resistant to interpretation; we can only speculate on possibilities of meaning; we are adrift as is the figure in the canoe, and ultimately not arriving anywhere in particular. Doig uses things that are familiar to us to (landscapes, photographs and films) to convey something introspective and nostalgic to convey something that is without or before words (Rexer 2008). Doig is indeed taking us somewhere, on a quest of sorts, though not to somewhere real, as stated again by Grenier (2007, p. 107): "This is how I envision the very singular project embarked upon by Peter Doig: as a new odyssey, the odyssey of history. His initiatory journey takes him not through the geography of unexplored territories but into the cartography of the recent history of a world that has become unknowable".

If we return for a moment to the works of Friedrich, Turner and Whistler (outlined above), it is possible to contextualise the work of Doig in terms of this project's investigation into the threshold. In many ways Doig uses a similar painterly conceit to Whistler in that he oscillates between two or more signifiers. Where Whistler moves between the ambiguities of whether the floating form is a boat or, more ominously, a human body, Doig oscillates between one time frame (one place) and another; between the image that he has made and the reference that he refers back to.

Karin Mamma Andersson

The first impression one gets from a Karin Mamma Andersson painting is a sense of intimacy and a feeling of warmth. Alongside this, however, is a disconcertedness – something is just not quite right (Hentschel 2012). There is a quality in Andersson's paintings that seems like memory, though the effect does not appear to evoke a memory *per se*. Andersson's paintings seem to reflect on the past, though a past that is not specifically hers; it is more a Northern European cultural past. Using a restrained palette, and careful composition, Andersson reflects on situations that embody nostalgia for times and places no longer present.

Adapting the key device used by Doig, previously described by Grenier, as a "twofold *temporal* movement", a key device used in the work of Mamma Andersson may be referred to as a 'twofold *spatial* movement'. In Andersson's work, the most significant application of the 'twofold *spatial* movement' is the creation of a fluid boundary between the inside and outside: from a domestic interior to a landscape setting. This fluid boundary between inside and outside is evident in the work entitled "In the Waiting Room" (2003), shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Karin Mamma Andersson, *In the Waiting Room* (2003), oil on panel, 85x122cm.

'In the Waiting Room' positions the perspective of the viewer inside the building looking out to the landscape. Andersson demarcates a zone *between* inside and outside, but in doing so, a specific *zone inside* and a *zone outside* are also created. An ambiguity, however, surrounds the middle ground of the image where a painterly yellow wash appears to be falling or dispersing from the background to the foreground. In 'In the Waiting Room' a designated doorframe is evident, but that doorframe is also the zone of the painterly wash that demonstrates the dissolution or

seeping quality of the boundary. The eye of the viewer moves across the 'interior architecture of the foreground' to the 'exterior landscape of the background' and back again, thus giving the impression that the viewer is approaching a landscape; simultaneously, however, the landscape appears to be forming itself onto the viewer. The juxtaposition of inside and outside, made fluid by the painterly yellow wash, provides a strange sense of *between*.

Teyssot (2005) argues that architecture bridges the space between the natural and the domestic world and, thus, that architecture gives presence to the idea of the threshold. Depicting architectural devices like post and lintels, sills, frames and architraves in conjunction with dream-like situations, Karin Mamma Andersson adds to the discourse on architecture as a mechanism of the threshold. The use of a domestic interior containing architectural devices provides a significant departure from Doig and the other artists outlined above. Where Friedrich, Turner, Whistler and Doig all worked with an *implied* threshold[7], in Mamma Andersson it is a somewhat *literal* architectural threshold – directly representing the architectural structures of the built form. The image contains the signifier of the conventional threshold (doorway), but the doorway is absorbed into the yellow amorphous blob. It is an illustration of the threshold in transition: the threshold is liquid. The blob shows that the outside is melting in to the inside or vice versa. The edge is becoming liquid: the boundary is liquid, fluid, mobile and in transition.

Karin Mamma Andersson is identifying a threshold *between* the inside and outside. The domestic interior depicted in Figure 17 demonstrates the sense of movement from the inside to the outside. In depicting a threshold *between* inside and outside, Mamma Andersson confirms that there *is* indeed (still) an inside and an outside. Even though Andersson demonstrates an ambiguous formation of space, where the outside is seemingly pouring into the inside, there remains a demarcation of the inside and outside zones as distinct entities.

[7] 'Implied threshold' refers to the examples of Friedrich, Turner, Whistler and Doig who all had thresholds that were in an external context whereas Andersson's is in an interior context (depicting architectural devices and domestic interiors).

Drawing on the example of Lovett Bay House, as a significant architectural precedent this research seeks to challenge and explore this idea that there are distinct zones of inside and outside in painting.

The process used by Andersson involves starting with an image that evokes a memory and sense of nostalgia and going on to convey that nostalgic scene in painting. The key methods used in this research, while drawing on a previously constructed image, go on to interrupt the process so that the paint is given more authority over the outcomes. This will be discussed at length in chapter 3.

Jess MacNeil

Australian artist, Jess MacNeil works across painting, drawing, installation and video, "often translating and cross fertilizing from one medium to another" (Museum of Contemporary Art Australia 2015, no page given). MacNeil primarily explores public spaces and how these spaces are viewed from a variety of subjective vantage points, as well as how people configure themselves in relation to others. Lewis (2006) states: "[MacNeil] often questions or exploits the way the artist, viewer, and subject are situated in relation to the work, either directly through trace, residue, or reflection or indirectly by depiction, inference, absence or erasure". Depicting sparse scenes that are drawn from her personal photographic archive of travel and holiday snaps, MacNeil delicately balances the space between what is left blank and what is portrayed. This balancing of blank ground and portrayed figure is evident in Varanasi One (2006) shown in Figure 18.

Adopting the 'twofold *temporal* movement' outlined by Grenier in the work of Doig, and the 'twofold *spatial* movement' of Andersson, for MacNeil, this may be considered a 'twofold *spatio-temporal* movement'. This exegesis will now turn to the spatial aspects of the work, followed by how the spatial and temporal aspects interact.

In the painting entitled Varanasi One (2006; Figure 18), MacNeil deliberately leaves vast areas of the canvas unpainted; this absence works to fragment the picture plane

and, in turn, leaves large gaps for the imagination. According to Lewis (2006), MacNeil has been influenced by Édouard Manet's painting entitled *The Execution of Maximilian* (1867). *The Execution of Maximilian*, shown in Figure 19, depicts the execution by firing squad of the Emperor of Mexico. Due to the original work sustaining large areas of damage due to poor storage, and having pieces cut off the original canvas by Manet, only small sections of the original image remain. These remaining pieces have been reconstructed at original scale, depicting only partial aspects of the original scene. As a result, the soldiers' rifles are aimed at blank canvas, as all that remains of Maximilian is his restrained hand.

Figure 18: Jess MacNeil, *Varanasi One* (2009), oil, watercolour and graphite on canvas, 200x150cm.

The absence of key elements of the image makes it necessary for the viewer to fill in the gaps and imagine the possibilities for the blank space. According to Lewis (2006, no page given), this results in "an intriguing tableaux, which both communicates and obscures a moment in time… As viewers instinctively and repeatedly piece together

their own version of the obstructed scene, there is the space to contemplate the reasons for its violent journey to now". In the case of *The Execution of Maximilian*, the *spaces* of the blank canvas are rendered highly significant through their very absence.

Figure 19: Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian,* (1867-8), oil on canvas, 193x284cm, The National Gallery, London.

As shown in Figure 18, in addition to leaving large areas of canvas blank, MacNeil also uses an amorphous, in this instance brightly coloured, monochromatic ground that works to demarcate a zone between one figure and another. These techniques of the anamorphous monochromatic ground and the blank spaces in the canvas work to both communicate and obscure. As stated by Lewis (2006, no page given), "Jess MacNeil's practice treats the pictorial plane in a … way [that allows] absence to play an active role in the interpretation of her subject matter and medium". This directly links back to *The Execution of Maximilian,* as previously discussed.

The blank spaces in the canvas, demonstrated in Varanasi One (Figure 18), leave gaps for the viewer to fill, as is the case with *The Execution of Maximilian*, shown in Figure 19. The viewer is able to reconstitute the spatial elements of the painting – rendered absent by the artist. In doing so, however, the viewer also draws the connections between the figurative elements of the painting now (in the viewing moment) and the moment in time that the painting portrays – the place (Varanasi) then. This links to the way memory works, in that memories are fragmented and isolated.

There are significant similarities and differences between MacNeil and Andersson's paintings. An example of the similarity and difference between Andersson and MacNeil is when Andersson uses the blob, in 'In the Waiting Room' (Figure 17), to demarcate the threshold zone between the internal and external spaces of the image, and to join them together; whereas MacNeil uses the amorphous monochromatic 'blob' to render spaces absent, thus creating a space between the figures. The figurative elements of the image demarcate the works, as the viewer's eye shifts from figure to figure. Unlike Andersson's "In the Waiting Room" (Figure 17), in MacNeil's "Varanasi One" (Figure 18) the amorphous ground spills into the figures, which, in turn, challenges their representational elements. The effect of this 'spilling' is destabilizing. Instead of absorbing the image as a whole or as complete, we jump from fragment to fragment and, in a similar way we jump from memory to memory.

The 'spatio-temporal movement' demonstrated through MacNeil's Varanasi One (Figure 18) provides the final work in the logical progression towards the painting methods employed in this project. While thematically both MacNeil and the paintings of this research explore ideas of place, specifically in terms of the 'threshold as a device', there are several key places where MacNeil's work differs. Where MacNeil uses the amorphous monochromatic 'space between' as a screen, to obscure and to make absent, my screen forms a part of the scene and is therefor a presence. The purpose of this is to conceal and reveal at the same time – and thereby present a situation of an overlapping, simultaneous, or – an uncanny threshold.

In this chapter I have provided a progressive journey through the works of Caspar David Friedrich, J.M.W. Turner, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Peter Doig, Karin Mamma Andersson and Jess MacNeil. I have argued that each of these painterly investigations draws on ideas of the threshold that help to build the context through which my argument for this research may be developed. It is the aim of this exegesis to demonstrate that the threshold in painting is not necessarily a transitional space. As shown through the work of Leplastrier and Lambert and Lovett Bay House, architecture, and in particular, exceptional site-specific architecture, provides the practical and experiential mechanism through which the theory of the threshold may be transformed or advanced. In this exegesis I argue that the threshold may be a zone of overlapping and simultaneity of 'inside' and 'outside'. This theoretical and experiential understanding is brought to bear on the painted works in order to explore this *uncanny threshold* in visual form.

In Chapter 3, Methodology, I will demonstrate how it is that I have explored the threshold as a device in painting.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In Chapter 2, I introduced the threshold as the central theoretical concept in the development of this research. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate how the concept of the threshold has evolved as a methodological device in my painting. In Chapter 2, using the example of Lovett Bay House, I demonstrate that a threshold might not necessarily be transitional. In doing so, I explore what I describe as an overlapping or simultaneous space – an *uncanny threshold*.

Background

In the early phase of this research I experimented with several different painterly methods. Each of these *tests* helped me to expand my understanding of the threshold as a painterly and conceptual entity. The problem, however, was that each addressed the idea of the threshold as a *space between* and, so, did not progress past the initial testing period. Through painting the exercises I was able to determine that the threshold as a 'space between' is problematic, because to be *between* presupposes a state where there is a space *between two things*. If we step back momentarily to Lovett Bay House, it is evident that the *space between* is untenable because Lovett Bay House does not have the *bounded* form that allows for a 'space between'. At Lovett Bay House there is no front door or bounded inside and bounded outside. Rather, all are present as one - as a single overlapping space.

I will now outline how each of the tests are significant in the evolution of the project and the logic of the final idea, while also demonstrating how they do not coalesce with the research aims to engage with and provide *a quality of* the threshold as an overlapping space in painting. What follows is a chronological journey through the project's painterly evolution, moving from the threshold as *between* to the threshold as an *overlapping* or *simultaneous* space. There are two categories (i) Painterly exercises, and, (ii) Links to Modernism as the uncanny sublime.

Part One: Painterly Exercises

Painterly exercises included:

(i) The Mirror
(ii) Rorschach
(iii) The space between the trees (pink)
(iv) Through the trees (highlight around trees: the reveal)
(v) The edge becomes a window
(vi) Overlay (in and out at the same time)

(i) The mirror

The first investigation borrowed the methodological device of the mirror. In this series, two panels of the same dimensions were placed adjacent to each other, with one image reflected in the other. It was my intention that the viewer would look from one to the other, and back, and, thus, oscillate *between* the two paintings (see Figures 20 and 21). The works were not actually about the 'shift' or 'oscillation' *per se*; rather they were an attempt at holding the viewer in a space *between* the two images. The mirror effect aimed to unsettle the viewer in the act of viewing the work by prompting them to question whether the reflected images were the same, or not; which work is the original, and, whether or not one of the two is more 'complete' than the other.

The works attempted to hold the eye in a point *between* the two paintings but the movement of the eye across the image, back and forth – which was necessary to contemplate the works – drew away from the arrival at the *between*. However, as a methodological device, the mirror was constrained by the same lateral action of viewing that it was trying to generate.

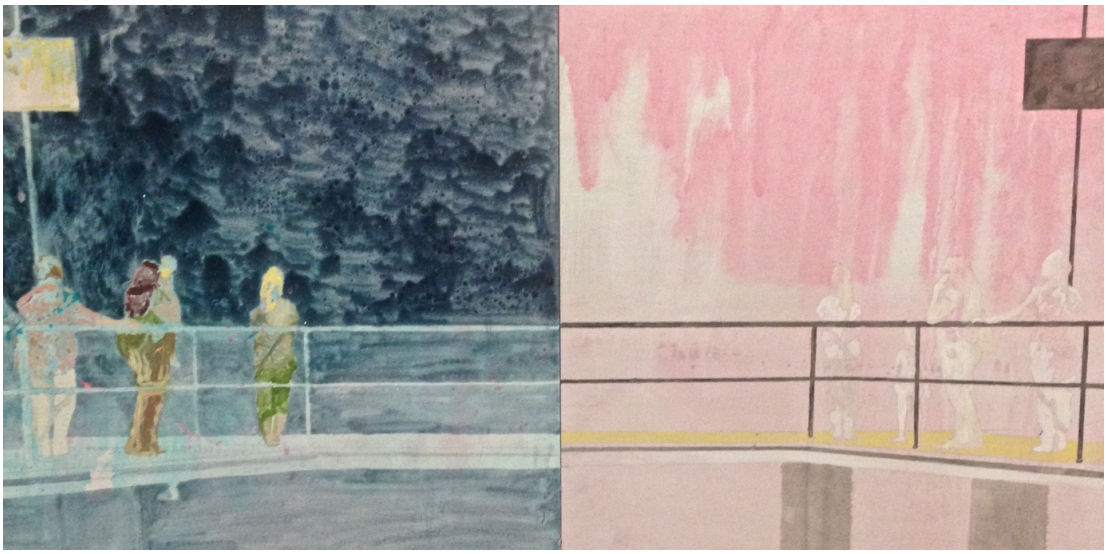

Figure 20: Ben Taylor, *Waiting (a)* (2013).

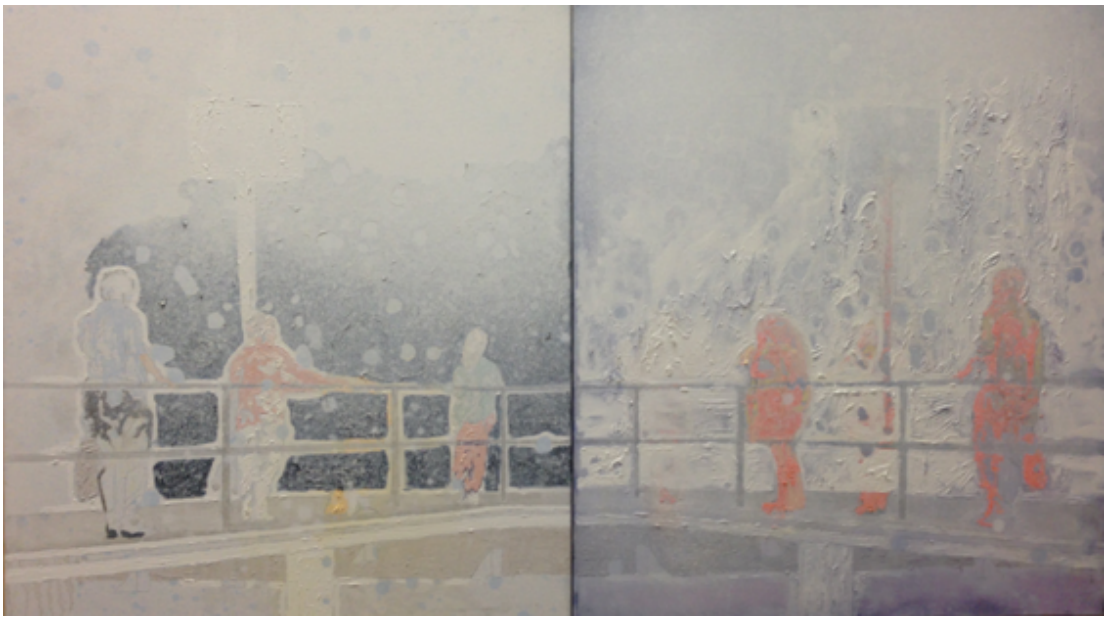

Figure 21: Ben Taylor, *Waiting (b)* (2013).

(ii) Folding imprint

Following the mirror series, I experimented using the folding imprint as a methodological device[8] (Figure 22). Using the folding imprint, I was able to construct multiple variations on the mirror theme, with the aim of exploring the threshold as a space 'between'. I used a number of techniques and a variety of approaches to colour, paint thickness, paint application and ground. None of these experiments identified with the research aims. In fact, the folding imprint went completely outside of the

[8] The folding imprint technique draws on the Rorschach Inkblot test used to conduct psychological testing.

project because, like the mirror works, it led the eye to move across and oscillate between the two images rather than contain two in one.

Figure 22: Ben Taylor, *Folding imprint* (2013).

(iii) Reflection

After the mirror and folding imprint, a further test was conducted. This test involved shifting the visual oscillation from the lateral, horizontal plane, to the vertical, using the reflection (Figure 23). The figure was used to add movement to the image, resulting in a form of 'figurative mirroring'. The shift from lateral to vertical was not entirely successful, however, as the movement in the figure implied a horizontal plane. The result was, therefore, that the lateral movement in the picture is continued as in the mirror, and, the vertical movement is continued as in the folding imprint, thus creating a cross-like action. This cross-like perspective worked, in effect, to shift the focus from a line to a point.

While the reflection works developed a less exact, less literal form of mirroring than the mirror and the folding imprint series, and, thus, a more poetic image, they did not

convey the threshold as a simultaneous and overlapping space. It was back to the drawing board.

Figure 23: Ben Taylor, *Reflection (a) and (b)* (2013).

(iv) The space between the trees (pink)

The next series began with an exploration of the screen. The use of the screen was a development of the effect of the 'oscillation' as in the mirror and the folding imprint outlined above, but, instead of shifting the view between left and right side or up and down the picture plane, the idea was to explore the transition as a movement between the foreground and the background or the salient and recessive space. A screening of foliage and trees was used to introduce this new shift (Figure 24).

The transition from the background to the foreground set up a space where the eye of the viewer moved between the inside and the outside of the painting (as it were). That is, the viewer was drawn towards the human figures of the painting, between the foliage in the background of the image and, then, the eye was shifted forward to the

frame or tree trunk. There was an awareness of being both inside and outside at the same time.

Figure 24: Ben Taylor, *Between the trees (pink)* (2014).

(v) Through the trees (highlight around trees: the reveal)

In these works the 'tree as a device' is continued, but in this case a white contour line is added to the outside edge of the trees (Figure 25). Rather than the eye shifting back and forwards, or in and out, the focal point is shifted (forward), resulting in a somewhat ambiguous foreground. The highlight around the trees made the

background and foreground appear to exist in the same pictorial plane, and the space between two things was opened up.

Figure 25: Ben Taylor, *Car in the trees* (2014).

(vi) The edge becomes a window

In these works the image is constructed so that a series of 'walls' perform the function of an aperture or window (Figure 26). A further border or frame is added around the window. The walls and frames highlight some aspect of the picture, whether inside or outside the frame, in much the same way as that of a picture frame. In this way, some things become more apparent than others and the eye of the viewer is drawn to move between the two.

In effect, through the use of clear boundaries and frames, these works demarcate their own betweenness.

Figure 26: Ben Taylor, *Boat and rail* (2014)

In summary, the preliminary 'threshold as between' works previously discussed were interesting, but limited in terms of their context. As painterly exercises, they were difficult to locate in that they had little relationship to me personally and did not help to develop the premise of the project. In addition, beyond their painterly training, the works represent an idea of 'threshold as between'. The works of each exercise are located *between* conditions – neither inside nor outside: in a zone between. This resulted in the paintings appearing dreamy and empty. While I like the heightened quality that comes out of the dreaminess, they are problematic because they convey a between rather than a simultaneous and overlapping space.

Part Two: Links to Modernism as the Uncanny Sublime

This brings me to the second part of the methodological process, and the way this research approaches the threshold as an overlapping and simultaneous space. The first, though unsuccessful, was via the painterly exercises previously mentioned; the second is through a connection to the Modernist paradigm and, through the use of

techniques and conceptual devices in Modernist painting. Describing Modernism, Berman (1988, p. 16) states:

> … world-historical processes have nourished an amazing variety of visions and ideas that aim to make men and women the subjects as well as the objects of modernization, to give them the power to change the world that is changing them, to make their way through the maelstrom and make it their own. Over the past century, these visions and values have come to be loosely grouped together under the name of 'modernism'.

There is an element of simultaneity found within Modernism that ties in with the objectives of this research. The "power to change the world that is changing them" (Berman 1988, p. 16) is an overlap of conditions that harks back to the zone of habitation and the simultaneity of inside and outside at Lovett Bay House. According to Gamboni (2002, p. 9) from "the mid-1880's to the first World War, … the notion of representation and the various forms it takes are questioned and challenged, but without representation being completely abandoned or rejected" (Gamboni 2002, p. 9). That is, in effect, using representation, to challenge representation and a further example of the use of overlapping conditions within Modernism.

Three aspects of Modernism have been explored in this research:

(i) A framework of tradition

(ii) Material experimentation

(iii) Continual experimental approach

(i) A framework of tradition

Painting has a vast history that goes back to the earliest humans. It has evolved as a cultural practice across all continents from the antiquities to the present day (Dunning 1991). It involves both continuation and change. In regard to the Modernist era, Steiner (1998, pp. 489-490) states:

> In Modernism *collage* has been the representative device. The new, even at its most scandalous, has been set against an informing background and framework of tradition. Stravinsky, Picasso, Braque, Eliot, Joyce, Pound—the 'makers of the new'—have been neo-classics, often as observant of canonic precedent as their seventeenth-century forbears.

Drawing on the Modernist approach of *collage* I have allowed and encouraged the same informing background of Modernism in my work. I develop formal and conceptual links to specific Modernist works. An example of this may be found in Orange Diver (2015), where I have made direct reference back to Manet's Boy with Bubble (1869; see Figures 27 and 28). The Manet painting is a figure in a window threshold, blowing bubbles. I take that reference and use a figure of a scuba diver as one who blows bubbles and set the figure at the threshold of the window of my studio.

Figure 27: Édouard Manet, *Boy blowing bubbles* (1869), oil on canvas, 100.5x81.4cm, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal.

Figure 28: Ben Taylor, *Orange diver* (2015).

This idea was interesting, but the simple imagery and material approach did not convey the subtlety of the concerns around the threshold that this research seeks to explore. For these reasons, this aspect of the methodology was discontinued.

(ii) Material experimentations

Berman (1988, p. 16) states that Modernism has been thought of as a

> … [s]ocially progressive trend of thought that affirms the power of human beings to create, improve and reshape their environment with the aid of practical experimentation, scientific knowledge, or technology.

In line with the Modernist approach, this project has sought out ways to reshape the environment of the threshold in painting through material experimentation. Such experimentation involves allowing the paint to take a lead role in the creation of the

final image. I have drawn from the Modernist approach by using "ambiguity and indeterminacy, and by promoting its materials and 'chance' to the rank of agents in their own right, the creative process itself anticipates and prepares for such a reception, placing the artist in the partly passive role of an 'operator' rather than an all-powerful demiurge" (Gamboni 2002, p. 241). These experimental devices have been interpreted to form part of the incidents. These incidents will be discussed further in Part Three of the methodology.

In line with Modernism, the works of this research seek an ambiguity that cannot be neatly described as figuration, abstraction or ornamentation (Gamboni 2002). This experimentation has included drips, pours, increased pigmentation, impasto, transparency, and the application of these techniques both separately and in combination. For example, I might experiment with drips of varying consistency or pigmentation; layering drips and pours using a variety of thickness levels, including matt and transparent effects; dripping into pours and layering drips and minimal traces, just to name a few. I use what has already been applied to develop what comes next.

While this was the experimental phase of this set of methods, it has formed the foundation for the final body of work. As a result, it will be discussed in greater detail in Part Three: Final Methodology.

(iii) Continual experimental approach

According to Kolb "[a]rt in our century has displayed a modernist tendency towards constant revolution and the invention of new forms" (1986, p. 19). The deliberate departure from tradition through the use of new materials and painterly techniques combined with innovative forms and expression of ideas characterised the Modernist era. Modernism pertains to a continual experimental approach. Indeed, Berman (1982 p. 16) refers to Modernism as a "state of perpetual becoming".

In the case of this research, I use several devices to facilitate this continual experimental approach. This occurs sequentially, in that each incident follows on from, and slightly overlaps the previous, but also in that the precise nature of the work as a whole is to take the threshold into a new area of expression. While specifically I take incidents that occur within the painting process and use them to inform what I do next; I allow 'chance', via the process of experimentation, to take a lead role in the painterly process. When pouring paint, for example, it is possible to have some, but not total control over the responsiveness of the medium. While my experiments are educated, and informed by the experiences I am having and have had in the past, they are often not totally 'controlled' as I use varying pigment/paint and medium combinations. Exposing each phase of the individual work to a further threshold drives the goal of this research to explore the uncanny threshold in painting.

Summary

The painting exercises outlined in Part One have involved a great deal of structured experimentation. The aim of these experimental exercises was to explore the threshold as an overlapping and simultaneous space. The result, however, was a representation of the threshold as between. These experiments provided the ground for Part Two, links to Modernism.

Outlined in Part Two, the attitudes to experimentation and renewal from the Modernist movement provide a significant guide towards the theoretical foundation of this research. While the 'framework of tradition' was beyond the scope of this research, the 'material experimentation' and 'continual experimental approach' were carried into the final methodology. I allow chance to have a part to play, in that I allow incidental moments to have purchase on the outcome, thus, disrupting the logical, linear or transitional processes of making a painting. As a result, the research is new work, but grounded in the methods of the Modernist movement.

Part Three: Final Methodology

Each phase of the painting process has been termed a 'threshold'. Using the example of Lovett Bay House, the interpretation of the threshold to which I refer is inside and outside as one. The shifts in process that occur within each threshold phase are called *incidents*. The *incidents* provide a shift in the process that leads to a new threshold and new incident overlay. This has the effect of disrupting the logical, linear or transitional process of making a painting, taking the work outside of the familiar and into something that is different, less familiar and somewhat strange. The incidents are intentional, in that I determine what form they take, and each painting, therefore, follows a sequential methodological process. The resulting works are, however, representational, as each incident diverts the logical progression of a work and takes it outside of what it might logically have become had I followed a representational path. The incidents, while following a process, use that process to break the linearity of the path.

In the following part of this chapter, I will explain the ways in which each painting is subjected to various incidental moments, or thresholds, throughout its genesis and development. It is important to note that material experimentation and continual experimental approach have been integrated into the final methodology, and overarching approach of the research.

Threshold 1: Visual incident

The paintings of this research begin with what I have termed, a *visual incident*. The *visual incident* may be defined as a coincidental moment where a memory is triggered by a place, experience or object. In the case of this research, an experience in Tasmania overlaps with, or has an uncanny resonance with the same or similar from another place – primarily being my past in New South Wales. I locate the threshold in an experience, my experience, of a place and time: Tasmania now and New South Wales in my past. On several occasions over the last couple of years I have seen or experienced something that immediately connects me back to something that I have seen or experienced before. It is not *deja vu*, it is more a conscious recollection and understanding.

Tasmania and New South Wales together constitute my experience of place, yet each contains what is outside to the other. New South Wales, and in particular, Sydney where I have spent most of my life, in many ways defines my sense of place and, therefore, who I am, yet that place is elsewhere and those experiences are of another time. In the same but opposite way, I am inside the place of Tasmania as it is my home, and yet I often find that my experiences here are defined in relation to, or within the context of, my understanding of places in the past.

The visual incident contains two places, or two conditions, within it, yet it is discreet from the incidents preceding and following it; it is both inside and outside the moment, simultaneously. I imagine this 'inside and outside moment' as an overlapping – an overlapping that has a quality that twists what is seen, such that it becomes distorted; it is at once homely yet unhomely; familiar yet strange.

The first example of a visual incident that I have used in this research is a small blue boat moored out on the Derwent. In my travels to and from work I pass by a blue boat moored in a small bay (see Figure 29).

Figure 29: Visual incident: source image, blue boat on the Derwent River.

On one of these journeys I was struck by something I had not thought about for years – a small blue boat I had as a child (Figure 30). The boat in the bay carried an uncanny resemblance to the boat of my childhood.

Figure 30: Visual incident: blue boat of childhood.

The second example of this situation is shown in Figure 31, where a situation in the present, snow in the back yard, drew me back to a situation in my past: a trip to the snow with my family. Seeing my own son looking at the snow and remembering that first experience of seeing and touching snow.

It is important to note, that, while the visual incident is an interesting moment for me personally, the content of the visual incident is surprisingly inconsequential. The objective is not to explore the *sense of place* that resonates between these two place times but rather to explore the gathering of that image as a threshold for painting. The visual incident is the first stage in the process of overlapping incidents that form the methodological rationale for the construction of the paintings.

Figure 31: Visual incident: source image, snow in the back yard.

Threshold 2: Representational incident

Following from the initial visual incident, the next step in the process is to document the incident. Having recognised an object or experience from my past, I then source an image of that memory from the Internet. An example of this is shown in Figure 32. I simply scan visual images until I see an image that captures the memory/new experience. These borrowed images visually replicate the remembered experience in some way. This technique of sourcing the images from the Internet adds another threshold to the process in that it shifts the original image from a logical progression and shifts the work in a new direction. Sourcing the images from the Internet provides a link to the experience in that it relates to the experience, but also, it is something completely outside of it. The selected image (from the internet) replicates the place or the experience but it also brings in something else; something *unknown* to the process. What results is a 'non-representational' painting. It allows one to look at what is essential to that experience in a more abstract way.

Figure 32: Representational incident: image sourced from Internet.

Threshold 3: Editorial incident

The next step is to transfer the image to canvas. This transfer involves editing the image to remove signifiers of the foreground and the background. That is, the editing involves removing the horizon from the image through cropping (Figure 33). Removing the horizon makes the image less fixed and more indeterminate in both place and time. The horizon-less image becomes a zone of ambiguity. Removing the horizon takes away the capacity to place oneself in relation to a boundary or fixed bearing.

A further reason for removing the horizon is that it flattens the picture plane, which makes the figures in the image take on a different significance. They now play a role in the reading or understanding of the salient and recessive pictorial space. Removing the horizon unfixes the viewer's position and unfixes the viewer's perspective point

creating a multiplicity of viewpoints within the image. This process renders the viewers' perspective as *mobile*.

Figure 33: Editorial incident: cropped image with removed horizon.

Threshold 4: Painting Incident

When the formal qualities of the image begin to coalesce, I start to work them into the next incident; to apply paint to the canvas. Colour perspective, drawing on "classic colour theory" is used to determine colour choices (Dunning 1991, p. 49)[9]. The key methodological device, however, is to apply the paint so that it has its own incidents. This relates to the previous section on material experimentation; a technique referenced from the Modernist approach of experimental painterly practice. Each application of paint is informed by the preceding marks, drips, drops, pours and blobs and goes on to influence what happens next: chance plays a big role in the process of making a painting. In this way, I give over some of the control of the image to the paint itself.

[9] A full description of classic colour theory and colour perspective is available from Dunning (1991, pp. 48-52).

The methodology of applying the paint, using blobs and pours, dots and drips, is a threshold or part of a threshold, but the result is a material incident. After applying drips, drops and pours I then work up a section of the figure using line and colour. I then apply further drips, drops and pours, and further work up the figures to completion of the image (Figure 34 and 35). Each time I respond to the paint that has already been applied. It is important to note that I am not trying to represent the figure as it might appear in the original photograph; rather I am responding to the painterly incidents as they occur.

Figure 34: Painting incident: drips, drops and pours (Taylor 2015).

Figure 35: Painting incident: drips, drops and pours (detail) (Taylor 2015).

Threshold 5: The concealing-revealing incident

Concealing and revealing is a significant aspect of the theoretical premise of this research. As outlined in Chapter 2, the threshold of conventional domestic architecture involves moving from inside to outside and vice versa. When one is outside, the inside is concealed (by the wall and door) and when one is inside, the outside is concealed. Only when one is in the threshold are both inside a*nd* outside revealed. This connects back to the reveal of the doorframe discussed on page 15 (Figure 10). In the absence of walls at Lovett Bay House, the space where the conventional threshold might have been is perpetually revealed. Correspondingly, it could be argued that in their very absence, the wall and door are concealed.

Figure 36: Revealing-concealing incident (Taylor 2015).

Up to this point a painting will show all of the preceding stages: the visual, representational, editorial and painting incidents. The final part of the process is the revealing-concealing incident. At this stage, a painting appears as a messy medley of colour, drops, drips and pours (Figure 34 and 35). To carry out this concealing-revealing incident I cover over large areas of the messy underpainting with a concealing layer (Figure 36). The figures of the underpainting, however, with extensive evidence of drops and pours, are left visible. The concealment is not obliterating; rather it renders significant elements of the painting revealed. The

covering over is a concealing incident, in that it hides certain parts of the painting, but it also has a specific role in revealing the figures.

Final Works

A number of visual incidents were experienced and documented in the development of this research. The final works however, involve two distinct themes: the *beach* and *snow*. In both cases, the initial trigger was a visual incident where I was reminded of a situation from my past (in New South Wales) by an experience in the present (in Tasmania). In each case (the beach and the snow), a threshold has been applied to the painting process to disrupt the logical linearity of the painting's development.

An example of a final painting completed for this research may be found in Puffer (2015; Figure 37). The initial visual incident involved watching my son engage with snow in a novel way that triggered a memory of my own engagement with snow on a family holiday as a child. Following the initial visual incident, a related but different image was sourced from the Internet (representational incident; see Figure 32), a transfer was made from the Internet image to the canvas (editorial incident; see Figure 33), drops, drips and pours were used to create an underpainting (painting incident; see Figure 34 and 35), and finally the ground was concealed to simultaneously reveal the figures (concealing-revealing incident; see Figure 36). Each incident inserted into the process worked to shift the control of the image from my hand.

The intention is not to represent the experience found within the visual incident, or a specific place. Rather, what results, is a collaborative relationship between the idea, the paint and the artist, and where the resulting process is about the material effects and the materiality of paint. The final images are not a representation of the threshold, nor, it could be argued are they a representation of the initial visual incident. Rather, the threshold, via the incidents, has been used as a methodological device. At each incident there is no pre-conceived outcome, rather, the outcomes are given the scope to be unexpected, and are, therefore, *not quite right*. The incidents were used to explore the overlapping and simultaneous space or the *uncanny threshold*.

Figure 37: Ben Taylor, Puffer (2015).

Chapter 4: Conclusion

Extent to which the aims have been fulfilled

The aim of this research has been to explore and demonstrate via painterly research and experimentation, what I term, the *uncanny threshold*. The foundation for this research lies in my personal experience of significant Australian architecture in the form of Lovett By House. Where Malpas (2008) argues that the threshold relies upon *transition* (from inside to outside or vice versa) for it to be a threshold, Lovett Bay House presents a significant exception and departure. As discussed previously, Lovett Bay House does not have a specific and designated doorway. The absence of a traditional doorway renders the nature of the threshold, as a concept, open to reconfiguration. Instead of a doorway, at Lovett Bay House I argue that there is a simultaneous and overlapping space. At Lovett bay House the threshold allows for an unusual concurrence of inside and outside, of architecture and the landscape such that one is revealed within the other. This research seeks to emulate that overlapping and simultaneous space within painting.

In this exegesis I provide a theoretical and painterly context drawing on a tradition of the threshold in painting. Using key works by Friedrich, Turner and Whistler that explore the sublime as a transitional threshold, I am able to demonstrate variations in how I see the threshold has been portrayed and key differences in the approach of the three artists. Drawing on key works by Doig, Andersson and MacNeil, I demonstrate how the threshold has been explored in a contemporary setting using such devices as a twofold temporal movement in the case of Doig; a twofold spatial movement in the work of Andersson; a twofold movement that encompasses both the spatial and the temporal in the case of MacNeil and in my own work, a spatio-temporal threshold that houses the two in one. Each of these examples highlights how my own investigation into the location and character of the threshold, is different to those previously produced, while also grounded in a long-standing tradition and evolution.

In order to explore the *uncanny threshold* in painting in this research, I have developed what I call *thresholds*. Each threshold houses *incidents*. Each incident

provides a shift in the process that in turn works to disrupt the logical linear progression of each painting. Drawing on Malpas's suggestion that when one is *tripped up* while crossing the threshold, one is forced to see things (almost by accident) anew, I argue that it is this moment of being *tripped up* that is perpetual at Lovett Bay House. The painting methods sought to emulate this perpetual reveal at Lovett Bay House. It did so by allowing (or generating) an *interruption* at each step of the method, at each incident, so that things might be *revealed* anew. Each incident has a quality of being unusual or extraordinary, but also seemingly inconsequential; familiar to the experience and strange to it.

The incidents were as follows: the visual incident provided the catalyst for the works; the representational incident shifted the work by relying on an Internet search to find an image; the editorial incident involved cropping and removing signifiers from the image; the painting incident relied on the paint to direct the process, and, finally, the concealing-revealing incident where parts of the image are concealed by an over-painting. Some areas of the messy underpainting are, however left visible. The resulting images are not conveyors of particular content; they are, rather, a consequence of paint: they remain open, without the fixed markers that differentiate between subject, content and materiality, rather, allowing these to be present, perpetually tripping each other up.

Research outcomes

The final works exhibited for this research demonstrate an extension of the painterly discourse on the threshold. What has previously been a metaphorical, conceptual or historical threshold, that involves a transition from one to the other, is demonstrated in this research as an overlapping – or, an uncanny threshold. This research uses each of the methodological *incidents* to convey the tripping up, the knock, the bump at the threshold, through which the architectural *reveal* is exposed. These stumblings at the threshold moments (executed via the incidents) cause a thing/situation that is both at home to the thing/experience and, simultaneously, not at home to the thing/experience. The removal of direction and control allows for the paint to do its

thing. As a result, it is argued that this research achieves its desired aims of exploring and demonstrating via painterly research the uncanny threshold.

The research's primary contribution to knowledge is found in its formulation of a theoretical model of, and painterly demonstration of, the threshold as *uncanny*. Through this exegesis the research shows that the key to the new is in the old; it has demonstrated the evolution of the threshold as a device in painting and honoured previous interpretations of this fundamental concept through the works of Friedrich, Turner, Whistler, Doig, Andersson and MacNeil. Further, it has reasoned how this particular advancement, drawing on the architectural advancement of the discourse provided by Lovett Bay House, makes a significant contribution to the threshold as a device in painting. This research has shown that the conceptual elements of the research materialised through the context and methodology are drawn from and realised in the practical elements.

Recommendations for future research

There are three key areas for future investigation that this research has made apparent. These conclusions recommend the following research:

1. Theoretical recommendations
    a. A thorough analysis of Modernism, including its conceptual tools, leading to a diverse array of painterly techniques and a stronger understanding of the uncanny.
    b. An exploration of the concealed narrative within an image. A painterly example of this may be found in Breughel's *Children's Games* (1560). In this image the narrative is completely anomalous to the figurative content.
    c. An investigation into the uncanniness of place that explores an idea, sensation or quality of being in two places at once. That is, not feeling quite at home, or being exiled from where one has formed a sense of home. This encompasses the familiar and strangeness of the homely and the not at home of ones place, both now, and in the past.

2. Painterly technique
    a. To research and explore additional painterly techniques including, for example, blurs and sprays in order to further explore the relationship between figure and ground and salient and recessive space.
    b. An exploration of the use of analogous colours with the aim of influencing the subject or content of the paintings to enhance the strange and somewhat heightened quality of the works.

3. Scale
    a. Experimenting with architecturally scaled works that have an unconventional relationship to the human body. This would provide a sense of the spatial for the viewer and allow them to experience the architecture portrayed and to gain a more nuanced and intimate sense of the threshold.

Final word

This research has explored the uncanny threshold as a device in painting. In doing so, it has contributed to a long discourse of the threshold. This research demonstrates that architecture, as evident in the case of Lovett Bay House, is able to generate new ways of experiencing and conceptualising the threshold. The significant quality of this threshold is that it is a simultaneous and overlapping concurrence of space, rather than a transitioning through. These new experiences and conceptualisations of the threshold have fostered the development of paintings that are methodologically innovative. The final paintings of this research demonstrate how the simultaneous and overlapping space of the threshold is realised through the methodological incidents of paint and painting, and ultimately through the revealment of what is not concealed. The result of which is a series of works where what is familiar is also somewhat strange: the uncanny threshold in painting.

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